

CONFIDENTIAL.]

## REPORT

[No. 26 of 1878.]

## NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

Week ending the 29th June 1878.

## LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Number of copies issued.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	
BENGALI.					
Monthly.					
1	"Bhārat Shramjibī" ... ..	Barāhanagar ...	4,000	Vol. 5, No. 3, for Ashārh 1285 B.S.	
2	"Rajshahye Sambād" ... ..	Rajshahye ...	.....	Part 15, No. 6 for July 1878.	
3	"Grāmvartā Prakāshikā" ... ..	Comercolly ...	200		
4	"Arya Pratibhā" ... ..	Bhawanipore ...	.....		
5	"Suhrid" ... ..	Calcutta ...	.....		
Bi-monthly.					
6	"Culna Prakāsh" ... ..	Culna ...	.....	20th June 1878.	
7	"Hindu Lalanā" ... ..	Nawabgunge, Barrack-pore. ...	.....		
8	"Sahayogī" ... ..	Bhowanipore, Calcutta ...	.....		
Weekly.					
9	"Banga Hitaishī" ... ..	Bhowanipore ...	.....		
10	"Bhārat Mihir" ... ..	Mymensingh ...	658		21st ditto.
11	"Bhārat Sanskarak" ... ..	Harinābhi ...	.....		
12	"Bengal Advertiser" ... ..	Ditto ...	.....		26th ditto.
13	"Bishwa Dūt" ... ..	Tāligunj, Calcutta ...	.....		
14	"Bardwan Prachārikā" ... ..	Burdwan ...	165		25th ditto.
15	"Burdwan Sanjivani" ... ..	Ditto ...	.....		
16	"Dacca Prakāsh" ... ..	Dacca ...	400	23rd ditto.	
17	"Education Gazette" ... ..	Hooghly ...	1,168	21st ditto.	
18	"Grāmvartā Prakāshikā" ... ..	Comercolly ...	200	27th ditto.	
19	"Hindu Hitaishini" ... ..	Dacca ...	300	22nd ditto.	
20	"Hindu Ranjikā" ... ..	Beauleah, Rajshahye... ..	.....	19th ditto.	
21	"Murshidabad Pratinidhi" ... ..	Berhampore ...	.....	21st ditto.	
22	"Pratikār" ... ..	Ditto ...	235	21st ditto.	
23	"Rungpore Dik Prakāsh" ... ..	Kākinia, Rungpore ...	250	2nd May 1878.	
24	"Sādhārani" ... ..	Chinsurah ...	516	23rd June 1878.	
25	"Sahachara" ... ..	Calcutta ...	.....	24th ditto.	
26	"Sambād Bhāskar" ... ..	Ditto ...	.....	22nd ditto.	
27	"Sulabha Samāchār" ... ..	Ditto ...	5,500		
28	"Soma Prakāsh" ... ..	Bhawanipore ...	700		24th ditto.
Bi-weekly.					
29	"Banga Mitra" ... ..	Calcutta ...	4,000	19th and 28th June 1878. 21st to 28th ditto. 20th, 22nd, and 24th June 1878. 21st to 28th June 1878.	
Daily.					
30	"Sambād Prabhākar" ... ..	Calcutta ...	550		
31	"Sambād Purnachandrodaya" ... ..	Ditto ...	.....		
32	"Samāchār Chandrikā" ... ..	Ditto ...	625		
33	"Banga Vidyā Prakāshikā" ... ..	Ditto ...	.....		
34	"Arya Mihir" ... ..	Ditto ...	.....		
ENGLISH AND BENGALI.					
Weekly.					
35	"Howrah Hitakari" ... ..	Bethar, Howrah ...	300	16th and 23rd June 1878.	
36	"Murshidabad Patrikā" ... ..	Berhampore ...	.....	21st June 1878.	
37	"Burrisal Vartābaha" ... ..	Burrisal ...	300	22nd ditto.	
ENGLISH AND URDU.					
38	"Urdu Guide" ... ..	Calcutta ...	400		
URDU.					
Bi-monthly.					
39	"Akhbār-ul-Akhiār" ... ..	Mozufferpore ...	.....	26th ditto.	
HINDI.					
Weekly.					
40	"Behār Bandhu" ... ..	Bankipore, Patna ...	509	21st ditto.	
PERSIAN.					
41	"Jām-Jahān-numā" ... ..	Calcutta ...	250	21st ditto.	



## PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION.

BHARAT MIHIR,  
June 20th, 1878.

THE *Bhārat Mihir* says that the high opinion of the good and excellent qualities which it set forth in its columns of Mr. Lethbridge on his appointment as Press Commissioner have been amply verified by his recent action in securing for the Native Press the privilege of receiving press telegrams at the rates accorded to the English newspapers. For this he deserves all our thanks. He hopes, however, that in future endeavours will be made to elevate the tone of the Native Press.

BHARAT MIHIR.

2. This paper, rectifying an error into which the *Sylhet Prakāsh* has fallen regarding the independence of Assam, says that that province suffered more than Bengal by reason of the separation; that the latter is much further advanced in civilization, and that the language and customs of the two provinces differ but a trifle; the re-amalgamation of the two therefore is desirable, as railways and the spread of education would serve to smooth all little existing differences, especially in the language, which is closely allied to the Bengali. Colonel Keatinge may be said to have done nothing for the improvement of the province; but in not enforcing the provisions of Act IX, he deserves all the praise that the *Sylhet Prakāsh* accords him. In conclusion, the Editor strongly recommends the Sylhet paper to get up a petition for the re-amalgamation of Assam with Bengal, while the subject is under the consideration of the Imperial Government.

SULABHA SAMACHARA,  
June 22nd, 1878.

3. The *Sulabha Samāchāra* says that, after inflicting a great deal of hardship, annoyance and dishonour, the Government has turned a kind look towards the native newspapers, by directing the Press Commissioner to supply them with telegraphic news at the same rate as the English newspapers get them. The Editor does not, however, attach much weight to this concession; as the majority of the vernacular papers are weeklies, and the few dailies that exist are not in a position to be able to pay the expenses for telegrams; nor do they see the necessity for doing so, because all important news can be taken from the English papers; and the Bengalis are of a saving character, and if they might get anything without paying for it, they will gladly avail themselves of the opportunity. This paper has two requests to make to Government: first, to let the Native Editors have the Government weekly report on the Spirit of the Native Press for perusal as before; if there is anything reprehensible in these extracts let the world see them; 2ndly, let those Government advertisements which appear in the *Exchange* and some of the other newspapers be sent also for insertion to the principal native papers; this will not only be of great assistance to them, but also give a better effect to the desires of Government. The High Court and Municipal advertisements are at present given out to papers whose circulation is but limited: some only of the Native-English papers, who also get these advertisements, have a wide circulation. We are given to understand that the officers of some offices, who are entrusted with the duty of sending advertisements to the papers, receive gratuities of a few rupees from the papers they choose to favour, the amount of the remuneration varying with the circulation of the paper. Government is desired to look into this matter.

MURSHIDABAD  
PATRIKA,  
June 21st, 1878.

4. That very material injury has been inflicted on the native newspapers by the passing of Act IX, the *Murshidābād Patrikā* says, there can be no doubt: our regular and casual correspondents do not write so frequently and fearlessly as before. Hitherto they did not hesitate to communicate to us for

The evil effects of the Press Act.



publication anything that happened to fall under their observation. Their partial silence now will encourage bad characters and prove injurious to the country. In fact a taste for writing in the newspapers, even for self-improvement, is gradually disappearing. Many important events of the day are allowed to pass without comment. The native newspapers are in fact losing all their energy to the detriment of the country's best interests. Those who can understand a little English prefer borrowing money to subscribe for the English newspapers; the native papers they do not believe in, even if they may read them *gratis*. The greatest error into which Government has fallen is to think that peasants patronize the native papers.

5. Calcutta, says the *Sádháraní*, has no less than three civilized Political Associations of Bengalis, viz. first, the Landholders or British Indian Association; second, the Mercantile or Indian League; and third, the Intellectual or Indian Association. The first of these is matured and fully developed, getting through its work with precision. The other two are but imperfect in their constitution, and may be compared to children not fully developed and unintelligible in their thoughts and actions; these two may in every respect be considered as one. At the meeting to protest against the Vernacular Press Act, though not a single member of the British Indian Association was to be seen, the honored and respectable members of the other two Associations carried on the business of the day. It would be pleasant indeed to see the three Associations unite and form themselves into one. Only at present, circumstances seem to render it impossible; but these will in time be doubtless removed. The three united in the Civil Service petition; but in opposition to the Press Act, the first kept aloof; and we despaired of ever seeing the zamindárs acting as mediators in any differences arising between the rulers and the ruled. If the disputes between the landlords and tenants prevent the British Indian Association from joining the other two, yet there are several other matters on which the whole three might unite with advantage.

SADHARANI,  
June 23rd, 1878.

6. The same paper says it would be well if people were unanimous in opposing the License Tax. The British Indian and Indian Associations convened a meeting at the Town Hall for protesting against it; but the former, no doubt, thinking that its members at least would be exempted from the operation of the law, left the poor to take care of themselves, and made no proposal for its removal; but merely advised Government how to regulate its income and expenditure by reducing the latter, and suggested that the license tax should not be made permanent, but be levied for only five years. They, however, said nothing about the great injustice of taxing poor traders and exempting those enjoying large incomes. The majority of the Indian Association thought it better to vote with the British Indian, rather than have no agitation at all. Not satisfied with proceedings such as these, the native merchants convened a meeting at the Town Hall, the like of which for numbers was never before witnessed in Calcutta. We observed one good and promising trait, and that was the ability of the merchants to speak for themselves; we wish them much success, and hope ere long to see the Commercial and Intellectual Associations unite. As to the agitators against the license tax, we would advise them to circulate the petition in every zillah and obtain *lakhs* of signatures. This might be done with but little trouble.

SADHARANI.

7. The same paper, referring to the results of the Vernacular Press Act, says, our worst fears have been realized, for Printers have refused to continue to print another number of Rajaníkánta's work on the Sepoy Mutiny. The author is a poor man and without means, and has fallen into much distress by the

SADHARANI.



stoppage of his work. Bengalis who possess means should come forward and assist him with donations, since he is willing to print the work on his own responsibility; and if in addition to these a number of subscribers could be got to subscribe to his work, the history would be brought out and the reputation of Bengali literature sustained.

SANGBAD  
PRABHAKARA,  
June 28th, 1878.

8. The *Sangbad Prabhakara*, referring to the proposed re-union of Assam with Bengal, remarks that, whatever may be said as to the policy of splitting up people

The separation and re-union of Assam. and provinces, with the view to realize security and stability of rule, it will not accuse the English Government of following such a course; for all are treated alike in this vast empire. It has been hinted that as the Bengalis had progressed so much in every respect, the Government separated Assam with a view to keep the two races from having free intercourse with one another. We emphatically deny all such intention on the part of our Government, whose only desire is to see all the provinces under its rule thrive alike. The separation of Assam was proposed and carried out by Lord Northbrook, because the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal had not time to look after both provinces; and because it was thought Assam would thrive better under a separate Administration; and so Colonel Keatinge, a very able man, was appointed Chief Commissioner; though there are various opinions mooted in the newspapers of the day as to the prosperity Assam enjoyed under him. We do not wish to blame the Colonel; but all we have to say is this, that if it did not thrive under him, why may it not thrive under a worthy person like Mr. Bayley? At all events we approve of the resolution of the Government of India to give Assam a trial under Mr. Bayley first, before determining upon its re-amalgamation. If Assam is joined to Bengal, its improvements will have to be carried out at the expense of the latter.

DACCA PRAKASH,  
June 23rd, 1878.

9. The *Dacca Prakash* remarks that, as some of its contemporaries, in opposition to its own views, support the proposal of the Lieutenant-Governor to give

tenants a right of transfer of occupancy, the Editor reverts to the subject. It is alleged by the opposite party that, if the ryots are permitted to transfer "their rights, they will thereby acquire a permanent right in the land, and a special attachment to it in consequence; this will lead to the improvement of the land and a greater produce of corn, benefiting both landlord and tenant. Moreover, if a permanent settlement be entered into with the ryot, the whole country will prosper." We do not know upon what ground our contemporaries expect so much advantage to be derived from the tenant having a permanent right in the soil; nor do we believe that, in the absence of such a permanent right, that is, of an ability to transfer it, he will not be attached to the soil. The connection with the tenant only relates to his holding the ground; would his having the right to transfer it, give him any greater feeling of ownership than his present connection with the soil does? His right of occupancy under the existing law is quite sufficient to create such a feeling of ownership in the land; which would, however, diminish, rather than increase, if he were to secure the right of transfer. There are very few cultivators in Bengal who have no encumbrances; only a small number who can carry on their business without the aid of a *mahajan*. If, whenever they were in debt, they were at liberty to transfer the land, it would be impossible to tell how many pieces of land would thus be transferred every year. Whether he might desire it or not, his *mahajans* would compel him to sell, and bring the land under their own control. What greater attachment are they likely to have for the soil, if they come to discover that they have no permanent connection with their enjoyment of the profits of the land, and that, as soon as it is encumbered, the land may be transferred? On



the contrary, as soon as they know that they will be obliged to transfer their land, they will be indifferent about it; so that, instead of any advantage, great evils may result from tenants having the power to transfer their rights. But another consequence may be expected. The class of *mahájans*, by gradually taking possession of those transferred rights of occupancy, will by degrees become *tálukdárs*, and the cultivators will remain as they were. These *mahájans* will not cultivate the ground themselves, but create another class of tenants. Whether that class of tenants will have any right of occupancy or not, the propounders of this scheme do not tell us; yet it would scarcely be necessary to bring forth reasons to show that, in the course of time, such rights would be created. If so, there would be tenants, and tenants of tenants, to what extent it would be impossible to tell. If the proposed permission to transfer a right of occupancy be granted, the landholders will especially suffer; the value of their estates will decrease; and they will scarcely concern themselves in seeking the improvement of their estates or the benefit of their tenants. We do hope that the Lieutenant-Governor will, after careful consideration, be led to withdraw his proposition.

10. The *Sahachar* objected to Assam being made a separate Commissionership; and is glad to learn that there

The re-transfer of Assam to Bengal.

is some talk of its again being united to Bengal. He is willing to give Colonel Keatinge full credit, for what he has done; but he has done very little. A few new roads, a steamer to ply instead of the ferry boats on the Brahmaputra, and the introduction of cow-carts constitute all the improvements effected by him in his administration of Assam; but he has done nothing towards the development of the resources of the province, so as materially to effect its improvement. One reason is that the Colonel was not an administrator of the highest type; but the real fact is that Assam is a poor country; and when any matter of importance is to be undertaken, it must look to the Government of India; this would not have been the case had Assam continued to form a constituent part of Bengal. We therefore strongly recommend the re-transfer; and in the improvements of Bengal it will always have its share. The Government of India has recently advertised for tenders of steamers to ply on the Assam rivers, promising to aid them; but this plan will not result in any substantial benefit, if Assam continues distinct and separate from Bengal.

SAHACHAR,  
June 24th, 1878.

11. The *Sahachar* has some suggestions to offer on the amendments which Mr. Whitley Stokes intends to make in the Civil Procedure Code. In the matter of

Amendment of the Civil Procedure Code.

proving the verification of complaints, written statements, &c., the law, as it now stands, is as productive of evil as it is of hardship. In a recent case a respectable European gentleman signed a complaint and forwarded it from Madras to Rangoon for the purpose of instituting a suit; but as no one was sent from Madras to prove the signature to the verification, the Recorder of Rangoon was obliged to refuse to admit it. Under the old law, it would have been sufficient if the *Vakíls* in the case were satisfied. Under the new law, suitors, pleaders, and even the court itself, are put to inconvenience, and much valuable time is wasted. We would prefer a return to the old law in this matter. It is a waste of time, again, to compel a plaintiff to give as many copies of the complaint as there are defendants; because, when there is but one cause of action against many, a single copy should suffice. As the plaintiff gives a copy of the complaint, should not the defendant be compelled to give a copy of his written statements? The chapter on Execution of Decrees should be amended by the rejection of section 230, because it is not proper to show so much leniency to a debtor. Again, it is a very difficult matter to get a summons served in Calcutta. The former practice of serving it

SAHACHAR.



through a Sheriff's officer, though expensive, was yet certain. As to the Small Cause Court, every one knows what that is. It is fully employed. The peon of the present day cannot walk; he must have a conveyance. We once saw a peon drive to the court in his own buggy. There are no separate peons allotted for serving summons from the Mufussal. A man may have 25 summonses and notices to serve; he may have no leisure for two or three days; if a few pice be given, it might be different. Once we had unfortunately two notices to serve, and our Mohurir, after a good deal of entreaty, at last found an opportunity. A notice which had to be served at *Thanthania* from *Alipore* occupied three weeks; about the time it would take to serve a similar notice in Lahore. In our opinion Judges' summons from the Alipore Court should be served at once in Calcutta. If all notices and summonses from the Mufussal were to be served through the Alipore Court, they would be served earlier and at less expense. The chapter as to insolvency ought to be amended. District Judges have their hands full and the districts are large. People in the Mufussal, unless they are very hard pressed, do not seek the benefit of the Act. They have to this day a fear of debt; and an impression that dying in debt they will fare ill in the world to come. Why should not these cases be tried by Moonsifs? Those of the present day are worthy men, and there is very little probability of their erring in judgment; at all events an appeal might lie to the Judge. Finally, there is a great defect in the existing law as to purchase of property in Execution of Decrees. If a person buys certain property and discovers that the defendant has no right in it, his money will be returned. If, however, he deposits 25 per cent. of the purchase-money, and the next day it is found that the defendant has no right in the property, he presents a petition to cancel the sale; but if 15 days are spent in conducting the suit, the money so deposited is confiscated according to law. The sale is afterwards cancelled, but will the purchaser get his money back? The Act is silent on the subject. Next, if the purchaser fails to pay the full amount, and the property is again put up for sale and sells at a lower sum, the first auction-purchaser must of course supply the deficiency. We do not think this should be made binding. It should be left to the discretion of the court. Suppose the property be mortgaged, and no mention of the fact is made at the time of sale, the purchaser finds that he has to pay double the value of the property. Would he not naturally be inclined to relinquish it? The law directs that the existence of a mortgage should be declared in the notices of attachment and sale; but it provides no remedy for an omission to do so; for section 213 says that the sale will be cancelled if the owner has no right. In our opinion, if there be a lien existing on the property, which is not disclosed at the time of sale, the auction sale should be cancelled.

**SANACHAR,**  
June 24th, 1878.

12. The *Sahachar* informs its readers that Mr. Gladstone has succeeded in bringing the Bombay, Poona, and Calcutta petitions against the Vernacular Press Act before Parliament. He is a great enemy to oppression and tyranny; hence his exclusion from the banquets at Windsor. If there be not much debate on the matter, and only independent opinions are solicited, there is no doubt that the Act will be repealed; especially as the ministers would otherwise have to stem the ridicule of the whole of Europe. By far the greater part of the Indian and English Press is opposed to the Act, though some of the latter are but partially so; whilst those Europeans who are not Government officers, and consider all men on an equal footing, are ashamed of it; though they do not express themselves openly to that effect. Our supporters say very truly that a stringent Act is

Presentation of the Indian Press  
petitions to Parliament.



needed only to stifle sedition, but to write anything against the Native Princes, and to find fault with some local Government or public officer, cannot be construed into disloyalty. We have every reason to hope that the petition to Parliament will be successful; because the English will not be able, if it turns out otherwise, to bear the ridicule of France, Germany, Russia and America. After the eagerness with which the Indian Contingent set out to humiliate Russia, will it be said in Parliament that the lowest classes in India have no confidence in the British administration or the English race? We repeat that, if there be a debate on the matter between the Liberals, with Gladstone at their head, and the Cabinet consisting of Conservatives, the latter are so powerful now that Gladstone will be able to effect nothing. The only way to prevent a debate will be to get our Empress and the Prince of Wales, who love India, to give a gentle hint to the ministers; who will then not be so anxious to support the views of the Indian Government. Would it not be as well to forward a neatly drawn up paper to the Prince of Wales on the subject?

13. This paper says that it is the lower class of Europeans who occasionally are found guilty of committing acts of oppression upon the natives; but the magnanimity and kindness displayed by the higher class of Europeans shows a contrary disposition. Take for instance the recent case of the rescue by European gentlemen of four coolies from a fire at Simla. A great pity it is that we have no humane society to reward such brave and noble deeds. O native youths! after these examples of bravery and compassionate feelings, go and learn to do likewise. Providence favours the English, because they can count such brave men in their nation.

14. The *Sahachara* complains that since 1876, when law reporting commenced, only two volumes of the Calcutta and one of the Bombay Reports have been completed, while Madras and Allahabad has not yet issued one. Mr. Sutherland was more expeditious. Subscriptions to the Law Reports are like indigo advances; when once given and taken they must be continued, else one cannot expect to have a complete set. The lawyers are greatly inconvenienced; for, instead of having bound volumes for reference, they have loose pages. The High Court Reports should always be made complete for the year. Great care should be taken in selecting cases for report; and when selected, full particulars of each case ought to be given, and all the intricate points of law raised during the trial of the case should be noticed. Judges and suitors we are sure would find it a great convenience if the Civil, Criminal, and Privy Council cases were kept distinct from each other in the reports.

15. An anonymous correspondent, writing without date to the *Som Prakash*, complains, amongst other things, of quack doctors who abound in Khámárgáchi and find ready practice amongst the poor, who are unable to avail themselves of the offices of assistant surgeons or native doctors. In a recent case of childbirth, a woman lost her life through want of skill on the part of such a doctor. These men should be compelled to undergo an examination at the hands of the District Surgeon, or be made to relinquish practice. It might be well to appoint a passed native doctor to the medical charge of a group of four or five villages, who may receive his salary out of the Road Cess Fund. The same correspondent adds, that the paddy sown for the winter crop has perished, and that, if the weather continues as it is, the outlook for a corn crop will be gloomy indeed. Jute, hemp, and the *aus* rice crops are thriving.

SAHACHARA,  
June 24th, 1878.

SAHACHARA.

SOM PRAKASH,  
June 24th, 1878.

Quack doctors and famine prospects  
in Khámárgáchi.



SOM PRAKASH,  
June 24th, 1878.

16. It was an evil moment, says the *Som Prakash*, when the License Tax issued from the legislature, and its parts were framed in the fertile brain of Sir John Strachey, and when Government stood so much in need of money for the prevention of famines. How many lives have been lost, how many have been imprisoned and wounded, and how many innocent men are rotting in jail, and in how many cases public meetings have been held since the promulgation of the license tax, we cannot tell. Referring to the meeting of native merchants in the Town Hall on Wednesday last, the Editor says the following resolutions were passed: first, that owing to Government having imposed a tax beyond the means of the people, a famine is everywhere imminent; and under such circumstances, instead of increasing the number of taxes, a reduction of them might tend to remove the distress of the people. Secondly, that a country, so poor as India, is by no means able to bear the charge of the present high rate of salaries of its officers. The expenses in all departments of the Indian service and the Home charges might be easily reduced. Thirdly, that the new license tax does not affect all classes in a just and equitable manner. The poor, whose income amounts to Rs. 100 a year, are taxed, while Government servants on high salaries and men of wealth are exempt. It was finally resolved that a memorial on this subject be submitted to Parliament. This is the last hope of the natives of India. But if the Government here listened to the cries of the people, they would not need to make their complaints known to Parliament. There are times when the Government carries out its purposes, notwithstanding all objections that may be offered. Against this license tax, almost the whole of India, and almost all the native papers, objected. But the Bill passed through the Council. Mr. Strachey supported it by saying that the poor, who were compelled to seek aid from Government in times of famine, should be taxed. Upon what principle this was urged we cannot discover. The policy of Government has been that people should be taxed according to their condition in life and their capacity to bear taxation. That the poor who, in their distress, seek relief from their rulers should be taxed, is no part of that policy. We cannot believe that a civilized and munificent Government like that of the English would be ashamed to rectify its own errors. Let it do so in the present case and remove this tax, and multitudes will sing its praises.

Meeting held against the License  
Tax at the Town Hall.

BARDWAN SANJIVANI,  
June 25th, 1878.

17. The *Bardwan Sanjivani*, referring to the current opinion that the condition of the ryot of the present day is, comparatively speaking, a thousand times better than before, does not agree with the highly coloured accounts that have been given of the state of the ryots. Erroneous views like these, if entertained by ordinary people, would not create such mischief as they do when embodied in official reports. We therefore proceed to give our reasons for holding a contrary opinion regarding peasants: first, the lives and health of a large number have been lost on account of the fatal epidemic fever, destructive floods, tempests, locusts, and providential accidents; those who have survived are but living skeletons spending their days in untold misery; added to this, they have lost their corn and their all. Secondly, the soil, even if properly cultivated and watered by rain, has lost its former productive powers. Thirdly, expenses attending labour, the education of children, and medical attendance have considerably increased. Fourthly, the price of edibles and other necessities of life has risen, so that the poor ryots find it difficult to provide for their families. Fifthly, they cannot satisfy their cruel and tyrannical landlords by paying up their stipulated rents, and must meet other demands of the zamindars and their underlings. Sixthly, Government have, by the imposition of new taxes, opened out, as it were, new doors

The actual condition of the ryot at  
present.



of oppression against the already heavily ground down ryots, inasmuch as to the zamindárs has been entrusted the care of collecting these taxes. We have it from a reliable source that the *gomáshtá* of a certain *táluk* has been realizing Rs. 75 from a *mehál*, the Road and Public Works cesses of which were fixed at Rs. 50 per annum. If this be true, it will show that each new tax serves but as a new source of income to the landlord, at the expense of the poor oppressed tenant; whose present deplorable state may be imagined when all the higher powers are adverse to him. The tenants barely exist: no other set of people in the world, except the Bengal ryot, who has such capacities for endurance, could subsist under such circumstances: that such men should at times become as it were mad, and commit excesses, is not at all to be wondered at. If matters long continue in this state, it will be a bad look-out indeed for them; and they cannot hope to get over their troubles without the aid of Government, who should make it an additional duty of the Famine Commission now sitting to inquire into the causes of the present deplorable poverty of the ryots and to devise some means for their relief.

18. This paper continues its remarks on the epidemic fever in Burdwan. BURDWAN SANJIVANI,  
June 26th, 1878.

The Burdwan Epidemic Fever.

A famous European physician has, after much research, determined that fever and cholera

owe their origin to deterioration of the soil; his opinion is "that fever exhibits itself with much virulence in those places where the dissolved elements and particles of vegetable matter are found freely intermingled with the earth, which, when in this state, requires but a little heat of the sun, and a very small quantity of moisture, to make it emit the fever poison." But we are of opinion that it is necessary to still further elicit by inquiry whether it is this commingling of atoms and particles with the earth, or a material change in the soil, which is the cause of the fever. Some are of opinion that decayed rank vegetation, and the decomposition of the twigs and branches of trees, and not rain water, are the cause of the fever; and it was this opinion which led the public officers of Hooghly to clear away the jungles and superabundant vegetation of the district. This process, however, does not minify the disease. People who have dwelt for a long time in places overspread with jungle have never experienced the virulent fever of the present day. The villages in the districts of Burdwan, Bankoora, and Beerbhoom have much less jungle than Hooghly; yet the fever is not less virulent in these places. Although the forest and jungle in Hooghly is as thick as before, yet for the past eight or nine years it has not suffered so much from fever: so that, if jungles caused fever, the state of Hooghly would have been otherwise. We consequently do not consider this to be one of the causes of fever. Bad drinking water is likewise put down as a cause of fever. This would stand good perhaps where people use the stagnant water of tanks; but how comes it that villages lying on the Ganges, and whose inhabitants use only its water, are attacked with fever? The waters of such a river can scarcely be bad; and were it so, it would be natural to expect that villages lying on both sides of it would be simultaneously visited with fever: instead of that, however, it breaks out first in one village, then in another far off, and so on at intervals of time and space. The majority of the people in the Burdwan district drink the water of tanks, of which perhaps there are only one or two in a village; and people so using the same water are not afflicted alike.

19. The *Bishwa Dút* remarks that everything connected with the license tax seems to be done hurriedly; it was enacted in haste, and now the assessors and their assistants are making the assessments in a hurry. The duties attached to the license tax are responsible, and the

The License Tax and delay in commencing its operations.

BISHWA DUT,  
June 26th, 1878.



state and condition of the people should be carefully regarded. The very basis of the tax is wrong, and the Legislature was not able to determine what classes should be taxed, or what should be exempted. A hawker is taxed, whilst the barrister escapes; the poor are taxed, whilst the rich escape. If there is no indefiniteness in the preamble to the Act, the proceeds of this tax are to be given to help the unfortunate sufferers from dearth and famine. The proposal is a good one. But to deprive an already starving people of a portion of what they have, with the view of laying up in store for a future famine, is not sound policy. We therefore recommend the assessors to weigh well the condition of the different classes of the people with whom they have to deal. In the next place, there has been a great delay in commencing the license tax operations. It is now four months since it became law; and though the assessors have gone forth, yet up to this time they have not had leisure to visit all places; even all parts of the Presidency and the Suburbs have not been visited by the assessors. According to the law the tax should be levied from the 1st of April; but the month of June is passing away, and it has not yet been ascertained how much each one has to pay. The system is defective. Outward appearances are not sufficient to determine what a man's real circumstances are. One may have a two or three-storied house, yet there may be nothing within, and his family may not be able to procure two meals a day. A dealer may appear to be doing well, yet he may be deep in debt. We therefore recommend great care. The Editor inserts a letter from a correspondent in Krishnagurh, in which the writer notices that the assessor is a new comer, and knows nothing of the condition of the people; and recommends his consulting old inhabitants before he proceeds to assess any one.

GRANVARTA  
PRAKASHIKA,  
June 27th, 1878.

20. The *Grāmavartā Prakāśhikā* says that, in former days, people were always very anxious about the sanitation of their villages, proper drainage constituting the

The drainage of land. chief point. When, therefore, they observed an accumulation of water, they at once united to cut out a way for its escape. That good old and time-honored custom seems to be passing away; and the Editor proposes in the present article to investigate the causes which have tended to its abandonment. First, the zamindárs of the present day use every endeavour to deprive their tenants of their rights and of a permanent interest in the soil, and in these efforts they have in a great measure succeeded. Formerly these rights were not meddled with, and the tenants, regarding land as their perpetual property, in fact their all, spared no pains to fertilize it, and to this end never hesitated to clear the old drains or make new outlets for water; the village drains being connected with these, the water could easily be drawn off to the great benefit of health and at little or no expense. The attachment of tenants to the soil is, however, now decreasing by the efforts of landlords to destroy their permanent rights; and the water is left to stagnate, and the country to suffer from epidemic disease and barrenness. Secondly, the villagers of former days used yearly to dig up mud to raise their homesteads; but there are at present many obstacles in the way of doing this. We now are more theoretical than practical, and therefore not like the men of former times, who used to look after sanitation. In the next place, there were very few brick-built houses; at first the grounds about the existing earthen houses were elevated and repaired by diggings in the surrounding places, but in the case of pucca houses, when there was no means of getting mud for raising the ground, they sunk, and the surrounding excavations became large reservoirs of water; and it is to God's mercy alone we owe it that people live throughout the year in these damp houses. Had these dwellings been built on elevated sites, at first, with a decline for taking off the water, all might have been well. In the last place,



although the people living in earthen houses are able to preserve an elevation for the carrying off of water, yet the difficulty of procuring mud, and the expenses to be incurred when mud can be got, are great obstacles to the people taking steps for the drainage of water accumulations.

#### EDUCATION.

21. The *Bhārat Sanskarak* remarks that the question of early marriages seems to have hitherto had no place in the thoughts of those who had interested

Child marriage.

themselves in various social and other reforms, till Mr. Garrett recently took up the question. This pernicious practice is a stain on Bengali society, and is productive of the direst evils, marring the present and future prospects of our youth. When boys marry early, girls must inevitably follow the rule, and that too at a much earlier age. Many attempts have been made to abolish the custom, but not with much success. Mr. Garrett's proposal will have the effect of filling our schools with unmarried boys, and parents will think twice before they give their sons in marriage. This will, however, prevent many from aiming at high education. The *Vaidik* Brahmins, whose sons and daughters are betrothed whilst in the womb, or immediately after birth, will, if Mr. Garrett's proposal becomes law, have the doors of the University closed against them. Those poor students, who get married with the view of having their education expenses paid by their fathers-in-law, will have their prospects in life marred if they remain single. But the greatest sufferers will be the girls, whose parents will not have the patience to wait, but will give them in marriage to unworthy bridegrooms. As the majority of boys will not be able to pass the Entrance Examination at the age of 16, to keep them unmarried till they are 20 or 22 years of age will be tantamount to giving them a dislike for University education. No compulsion, like a Government law or educational order, will serve to root out the evil custom. Society will gradually reform itself; and thus it is that the Director does not entertain much hopes of the success of Mr. Garrett's proposal. It is good, however, that the subject has been ventilated amongst the Zillah School Committees, as this alone will prove of no little benefit and open the eyes of our community to the evils of child marriage. The Editor promises to return to the subject.

BHARAT  
SANSKARAN,  
June 21st, 1878.

22. In India, says the *Sulabha Samāchāra*, as well as in Europe, parents are extremely anxious to get their daughters off their hands; though in our own country, the

Child marriage.

anxiety on the part of fathers to secure proper bridegrooms for their daughters is allowed to run to extremes. They are never so pleased as when they can get a daughter married at a very early age; but when a boy, who has no means of livelihood, has yet to complete his education at school, and thinks of marrying, and finds himself the father of one or two children before he can succeed in acquiring the means of subsistence, then it is that matters press hard on him, and the cares of a family impede his progress in life. This would not be so if, without any burden, he were free to look about for himself. When the student has acquired the means of subsistence for himself, then let him think of marrying. Let our readers henceforth try and give up all care about having their children married early.

SULABHA SAMACHARA,  
June 22nd, 1878.

23. The *Sulabha Samāchāra* says that the passed native students of the Campbell Medical School are so far out-

Prospects of Native students.

done by the English students of the Medical College that they find it difficult to get a livelihood in Calcutta. He thinks, however, that if native doctors would but lower their fees to eight annas a visit, and charge nothing to the really poor, they would soon secure for themselves a decent practice.

SULABHA SAMACHARA.



## FAMINE.

BHARAT MIHIR,  
June 20th, 1878.

24. This paper says that, if *famine* means death from want of food, there is no famine in Eastern Bengal; but if it implies distress from scarcity of food, then Chittagong, Comillah, and all around, except a few places about Noakholly, may be said to be thus stricken. Letters have been received from all places in the eastern part of Mymensingh, except from Sherepore, as also from Comillah and Chittagong, complaining of the famine prices ruling all over these districts. It is not rice alone that has increased in price, but all other necessary articles; and there is no telling in these times of uncertainty when better days will dawn. This has been the condition of the country for the past two years.

BHARAT MIHIR.

25. An anonymous correspondent, writing to the *Bharat Mihir* from Comillah, says the corn there has dried up, the sky is barren of clouds, and the cultivators are crying out; the poor inhabitants of Tipperah are descending from the hills to the plains for food. Living skeletons have come here from Chittagong in quest of food; but there is none to be had.

RUNGPORE DIK  
PRAKASH,  
May 2nd, 1878.

26. The *Rungpore Dik Prakash* says that, unlike the famine of 1280 B.S., the prices of the necessary articles of consumption, such as vegetables, fish, milk, salt, have risen excessively high at present in the Rungpore district. The poor and middle classes are undergoing immense suffering, and unless speedy measures are taken, Rungpore will be the scene of a repetition of the Madras Famine.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,  
June 25th, 1878.

27. A correspondent, writing from Cutwa to the *Burdwan Sanjivani*, says that the present dryness of the season, after the fall of rain in the beginning of *Vaisakh*, has altogether destroyed the *aus* crop, and that there is no prospect of the *haimanta* (or winter) crop. The price of rice is daily increasing, and stands at present at Rs. 3-8 a maund.

## LOCAL.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI.

28. The *Katwa* correspondent of the *Burdwan Sanjivani* announces the appearance of a curious destructive wild beast in that place. In size it is a little larger than a jackal; it is black in colour and long in shape; no one knows its haunts during the day, but at night, it scales the walls and takes away the children of the place: four or five have already disappeared in this manner.

SADHARANI,  
June 23rd, 1878.

29. The *Sadharani* complains of the late delivery of papers and letters during the last three months. The Editor advises Bengalis to caste aside their feminine habits for once, to be bold and act like men, and send him the late covers, with the date of receipt endorsed on the back, authenticated if possible by the delivery peon.

URDU GUIDE,  
June 22nd, 1878.

30. The *Urdu Guide* draws the attention of the Muhammadan community to the practice observed by those in charge of the Government hospitals, of consigning to the *domes* (native undertakers), for purposes of cremation, the bodies, at an average of about three in a month, of poor and friendless Musalmans who have happened to die there. The Musalmans of Calcutta are invited to look into the matter; as there are many in good circumstances who could unite to pay the expenses of providing a decent interment for so small a number of their co-religionists.



31. *Rádhácharan*, a correspondent of the *Behár Bandhu*, writing from *Bárrh*, a large commercial town on the Ganges, in the district of Patna, where he is on a visit, amongst other things says, as Government has rooted out the consumption of *gánjá* in Bengal, it should order the cutting down of toddy palm-trees here, and thereby benefit thousands of people.

BEHAR BANDHU,  
June 26th, 1878.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,  
The 2nd July 1878.

JOHN ROBINSON,  
Government Bengali Translator.



